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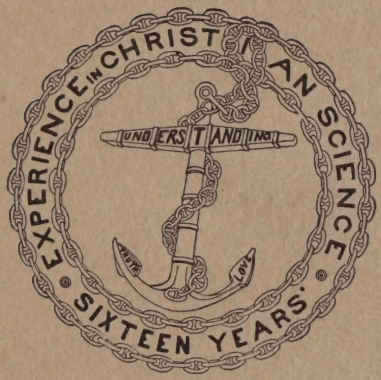

Josephine Curtis Woodbury

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April 3rd 1897

WAR IN HEAVEN.

SIXTEEN YEARS' EXPERIENCE IN CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MIND-HEALING.

BY

JOSEPHINE CURTIS WOODBURY.

7608.112

SECOND EDITION.

BOSTON, MASS.:
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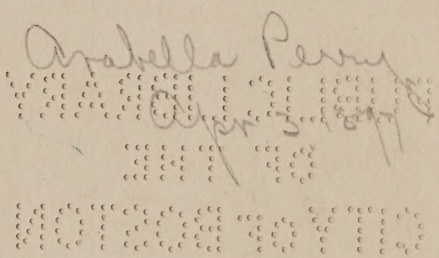

WHERE there is no vision, the people perish.

PROVERBS XXIX. 18.

THE only faith that wears well, and holds its color in all weathers, is that which is woven of conviction, and set with the sharp mordant of experience. — LOWELL.

WAR IN HEAVEN.

FIRST GLIMPSES.

IN 1879 came to me the first knowledge of a method of healing, called at that time Mind Cure; and the next year I received my earliest mental treatment, at the same time becoming acquainted with the book written by Mrs. Mary Baker Glover Eddy, called Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures. At once I found myself spiritually enrolled as an active soldier — I trust, on the right side — in a warfare between mental forces whose very existence had heretofore been to me a sealed book.

HEREDITY.

MY parents were numbered among progressive Unitarians and prominent Abolitionists, and I was also akin to other advanced educational and moral thinkers; so that I heard

religious and philanthropic topics constantly discussed, not infrequently by men and women, bearing names now household words in New England, who were leading reformers in the middle of the nineteenth century, and were frequent guests in my childhood's home. Though often beyond her comprehension, their ideas exerted a marked influence on the future of one juvenile listener.

Edwin Battles was my father, and Josephine Curtis my mother; and we lived in Milford, a large manufacturing town in the heart of Massachusetts, where party feeling ran high in pro-slavery sympathy with the rebellious Southern States; yet the harboring of a contraband beneath the parental roof did not intimidate me, and I remember asking the privilege of a ride, in the same carriage with my father and a negro, to a political meeting. "Shots may be fired at us in the dark," was the paternal warning; but the little daughter had her way.

Thus learning to love justice, right, harmony, and to practice self-sacrifice, there was fostered within me an ambition to be of some use in the world.

Through the family instrumentality a Unitarian Society was started, meetings being held in a small and barren hall, devoid of the custom-

ary worshipful paraphernalia; and this brought upon my devoted head the jeers of schoolmates, and the distrust of the master, whose sincere though severe views were of a conservative type which forbade his feeling any sympathy with what is called Liberal Christianity.

When my father also initiated a town library, and asked us children to aid its formative nucleus with contributions of our favorite books, the offering was cheerfully made, though I could not bear to give up my Uncle Tom's Cabin.

EDUCATION.

THOUGH the youngest member of a large high-school class, at the early age of sixteen I was graduated as poet and valedictorian, with the added honor of being the only scholar who had ever maintained one hundred percent of attendance for the entire four years, never being once absent, tardy, or even dismissed before the close of a session.

In 1866 no boarding-school in the country could boast a more famous group of instructors than the seminary established at old Lexington, by Dr. Dio Lewis, where I passed a most valuable year. Among them were Torricelli,

Grace Greenwood, Theodore Tilton, Catherine Beecher, Thomas Niles, Bocher, Moses Coit Tyler, Virginia Townsend, and Emma Lazarus. The pupils were drawn from representative and intelligent households in all parts of the country; and one might name the Danas, Sharps, Chases, Hills, Lincolns, Sewalls, Sargents, Tudors, two daughters of Nathaniel Hawthorne, and a niece of the poet Saxe. The real principal was the bravely progressive Theodore D. Weld, assisted by his wonderfully heroic and freedom-loving wife, Angelina Grimké; and chiefly from his instructions I imbibed that fondness for metaphysical study which became subsequently the groundwork of my life-thought.

BLOSSOMING.

DURING the ensuing years of my earliest womanhood African slavery was politically abolished, free-religious thought waxed triumphant, corporal punishment in schools largely gave place to moral suasion, and there were signs of the incoming of a reign of peaceful goodness. In a word, it might be said, in the language of Shakespeare:

> Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
> Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops.

Belonging to a race of men and women for two centuries furnishing educators for the public schools of the old Bay State, it was almost inevitable that I should follow in their footsteps, and for several years be a teacher in Milford, Worcester, and Boston, beginning at the immature age of seventeen ; and some pardonable pride may be allowed in one first to abandon, not only rattan and ferule, but every other form of physical discipline. That this was accomplished without detriment to successful pedagogy, is shown by the fact that seven rungs of the ladder led through as many higher schools, and that my retirement, after three years, was attended by the offer of still another promotion.

WEDLOCK.

IN 1874 I was married to Edward Franklin Woodbury, of Boston, certain particulars of whose lineage may be germane to this narrative ; for he can trace his descent through Governor Thomas Dudley, of Massachusetts Bay, the drapers Dudley, of London, the ten barons of the same name, — including in their line Robert, Earl of Leicester, of Kenilworth fame, — back to such English sovereigns as the Edwards, Henry First and Henry Third, John

(of Magna Charta fame), and Alfred the Great; while another ancestral chain crosses the Channel to Henry the First of France, and so on to Hugh Capet, the founder of the Capetian and Bourbon line of monarchs, who held the French throne many centuries, ending their actual power only with the ultimate triumph of the French Revolution, and still claiming the right to reign.

On both sides Mr. Woodbury's progenitors held offices in her towns, and fought in New England's cause, eleven being soldiers in the Revolutionary War; so that his sisters and children, as well as himself, are eligible to membership in the Governor Thomas Dudley Family Association, and in the various societies of the Revolution, Colonial Wars, and Colonial Dames.

In this connection interesting passages may be found in the Memoir of Honorable Levi Woodbury, LL.D., printed in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register; the Honorable Robert S. Rantoul's History of the Ancient Family of Woodbury, printed in the Historical Collections of Essex (Salem) Institute, Volume XXIV; and in the Honorable Charles Levi Woodbury's sketch of John Woodbury, an Old Planter of New England.

Soon after the Pilgrims there came to these shores the Puritans. Among them was this John Woodbury; and the Woodburys have ever stood for integrity, justice, and religious breadth.

The Plymouth Church was organized in Holland, before the sailing of the Mayflower; so that the first church actually founded on the New England shore was the one at Salem, to which our Governors Thomas Dudley and Simon Bradstreet once belonged. Says one writer:

> As an original member, John Woodbury bore his share in the building of the first meeting-house, and his descendants have a birthright in its spiritual associations.

Such was John Woodbury's high standing, that he was shortly afterwards sent back to the mother country as a special envoy from colonists interested in the Cape Ann settlements.

Subsequently dissensions arose, and in 1635, though afterwards reëlected to the magisterial office, this same Mr. Woodbury was expelled from the General Court, "ostensibly to punish the free speech of his constituent freeman, but really to repress the growth of religious toleration;" and this founds a claim "to place him among the pioneers of modern liberty."

John's son, Peter Woodbury, was a prominent citizen of Salem at the close of the seventeenth

century, and noted for keeping fast horses, to aid the escape of suspected witches from the provincial jurisdiction.

Of a later descendant, the Honorable Levi Woodbury, we read:

> In the matter of religious liberty and toleration, — won in New Hampshire in 1819, after twenty years of conflict, by repealing the power of towns to settle ministers, and tax the minority for their support, — when governor, he avowed his adhesion to the new liberty.

Another John Woodbury, Frank's grandfather, enjoyed the full possession of his faculties to the advanced age of ninety-six; and he entertained very broad religious views, being excluded from the communion-table for stoutly maintaining that there could be no such thing as total depravity, since he had never found anybody without sparks of goodness.

Of this man's son, Frank's father, as of my own father, Mrs. Eddy could well say, as she did at the wedding-reception of my brother, Wendell Phillips Battles, in 1889: "They are representative men of New England, standing for ideas."

> If there is nobility in descent, all the more indispensable is it that there should be nobility of ascent.

MORE LIGHT.

THOUGH as yet no special line of helpfulness claimed my attention, there was a heart-pain from the minor chord of human woe, sounding through and beneath the world's life, and not to be drowned by the steady march-beats of human advancement.

Much suffering being my marital portion, which even a husband's tender care could not greatly alleviate, the problem of physical agony at last seemed unsolvable. Youth's lofty purposes to do and dare were fading in the darkness and peril of protracted ill-health. Worn out with bodily weakness and the constant ailments of my children, — disheartened by the failure of various physicians to heal this frame, and of religion to strengthen the soul, — the year 1880 found me anxious to be released by death from a hopeless struggle, and it was at this crisis Mrs. Eddy's book was first placed in my hands.

Just then my boy was abandoned by our doctor as hopelessly incurable with membranous croup, a disease to which he had been subject from birth ; and all night long I watched speechless at his bedside, as he rapidly sank under the worst attack of his life. Happily a Scientist

was boarding in the same house with ourselves, and in the morning she came to my chamber-door to say that it must be because I had read a part of Science and Health already, that Curtis was still breathing; and she urged my seeking help from a stronger healer than herself. I acted on her advice at once. At nine o'clock, leaving the little fellow unconscious and apparently dying, as he had been for hours, thirty minutes later I returned from my call upon the healer, to find him absolutely well, gleeful, and wild with delight at his mother's reappearance.

TREMBLING IN THE BALANCE.

SO little was mental healing yet understood, that its practitioners were called Metaphysicians, — a name which even then seemed a misnomer; but I placed myself under this treatment, and in six days was entirely relieved of a difficulty of as many years' standing. In Mrs. Eddy's book was discerned El Dorado, the Golden Land of Promise, upon whose mountain-peaks mortals had only to gaze, in order to be healed.

In myself the result was wonderful. Youthful hopes once more asserted their sway, with visions of a glorious future; but this enthusiasm

was only temporary, for now was reached that Slough of Despond which, sooner or later, entraps the feet of all Pilgrims of Progress in Christian Science. Certain manifestations were unaccountable on any rational theory. Persons whom I persuaded to try this curative system drifted into abnormal actions. Their statements, sometimes written as well as spoken, were startlingly contradictory. All was not harmonious among healed and healers, and not yet was reached the tabernacle of peace, wherein a restored invalid might pass her time in serene contemplation.

In my own "chambers of imagery" also there was mental bewilderment. At one moment all seemed surely good; yet the next hour the feeling supervened that wrong was the great ruler, and that mankind might exclaim with Milton's Satan, "Evil, be thou my Good." Over the sky hung a subtle pall. Was there a vision of the two wonders revealed by the angel of the Apocalypse, — the Serpent and the Woman?

ANTAGONISM.

AS experience deepened, it became evident that not only was there War in Heaven, but that here was a call to be a warrior, though

the recruit was ignorant how or what to fight. Youthful training now made itself felt. Duty called to exertion. If there were antagonistic powers of good and evil, whose potency had not heretofore been suspected, they must be investigated, both for one's own safety and the general welfare, even at the cost of possible martyrdom; but might not the plaudit Well Done! await the winner?

EFFECTS.

DOING my best to convert my boarding-house companions to the new faith, there came one opportunity to forestall an epidemic of fear. Two other children being stricken with malignant chicken-pox, I was urged to remove my little ones. Aforetime this behest would have been heeded; but no fear now oppressed me, and the children stayed where they were. Moreover, the alarm speedily subsided, and no new cases broke out among us.

As yet an infant in Truth, I knew but one Christian Science healer; and she professed strong opposition to all variants from the teachings of Mrs. Eddy, and declared the methods of these errant practitioners fraught with dangers, against which it was necessary to guard both one's self and one's patients.

These revelations were so alarming that finally our family sought refuge at the seaside; and, in connection with this removal, occurred some unpleasant personal and business experiences, causing a relapse from vigor into a painful illness, and well-nigh wrecking hope and faith.

SUFFERING AND VICTORY.

OF course the real cause of these ailments was not at once apparent, but coincident with diligent search for their source, extraordinary feelings arose. Great dread overcame me, at times amounting to horror. Old physical troubles resumed their dominion with twofold tyranny. Despite the efforts of a Christian Science healer, I grew steadily worse. Death seemed so near that once, in the unconscious night-watches, those about me summoned a physician; and after severe maternal peril I rallied long enough to hear him say: "Nothing can save her now but morphine, and that promises only a slight chance!"

With superhuman strength I appealed to my stricken husband: "O Frank, help me to cling to God!" and then locked my teeth and fainted. Later I was assured that the few crumbs of truth assimilated from Science and Health

had been the sole rescuer; for no morphine was administered, and the medical attendant left me with the conviction that there was little hope, though the next morning happily found me far on the road to recovery.

THE TRUE LEADER.

THESE events convinced me that a momentous spiritual battle impended; but on which side should one enlist, since different leaders were contending for mastery? The name of the true leader was demanded, as well as what issue was at stake. A Babel of voices responded, but only one caught my inward ear, — a name already heard, and belonging to a woman seen once in the year previous, when she spoke in a "new tongue," not yet understood by my heart. This was the authoress of Science and Health, whom some called the Mother of Christian Science.

In a few days after leaving my sick-bed I determined to judge for myself, and sought Mrs. Eddy in her Lynn residence. While awaiting her coming, in a large sunny parlor, I scented the luxuriant plants in the window-seat; and of these we spoke, when she presently greeted me with graceful courtesy. Then I

repeated to her the details of my last illness, an explanation of which, from a mental standpoint, she most kindly offered me.

Surely here was an exalted leader, and I dimly foresaw a prolonged contest, with thoughts for weapons, against influences portentous to the doughtiest heart. Moreover, the antagonism was not between one life and another, but arose within the circle of the same individual life; thus illustrating the words of Paul, "their thoughts meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." Here was the exponent of the Christian Science movement; a woman ready, willing, able to "bruise the Serpent's head;" and perforce the opposite of Christian Science must likewise have its personified purpose.

At this point my former helper was unable to sustain me, inasmuch as the time had evidently come for me to work out my "own salvation with fear and trembling."

As soon as my acquaintanceship warranted, Mrs. Eddy was invited to meet, at my home, one of Boston's most eminent divines, who said to her: "I have preached the living God for forty years, but never felt His presence and power as you do." He even invited her to occupy his pulpit some Sunday, though this

proposal never came to fruition. Of Mrs. Eddy's volume he said: "It leavens all my sermons!" but he pursued his investigations no further.

COLLEGE AND SORROW.

IN the spring of the next year, when Mrs. Eddy's school was removed to Boston, it was our privilege to assist in procuring its location at 569 Columbus Avenue, a house she vacated in 1883 for the one next door, numbered 571.

As a result of these relations, Mrs. Eddy invited Mr. Woodbury and myself to enter her primary class, at the reduced rate of a hundred dollars each, one third of the regular price. The course was to include ten evening lessons, and to be attended by four couples beside ourselves; but the others speedily sought instruction elsewhere, for hardly had the lessons begun, when Dr. Asa G. Eddy, our Teacher's husband, fell violently ill, and the class was unavoidably postponed.

In May the cloud lifted. Dr. Eddy was better, and another class was formed, consisting of five students; but after a few lessons, still glowing in my memory, he was again stricken, and in a few days passed away. Here it may

be noted that the demise of this peace-loving, pioneer student, was by some attributed to inimical mental influences.

Subsequently, in a conversation with my father's old friend, Wendell Phillips, about mental phenomena, I found that he regarded mesmerism rather as pastime than fact; but he said he had read Science and Health with interest and approval, and now extended his sympathy to its author, a widow in her affliction; but when besought to study the possibilities of mental slavery he replied:

> My child, no man can successfully identify himself with but one crusade in a lifetime. My mission is well-nigh ended; for forty years I have held my life in God's hands, to do with it as he willed; but you are started on a warfare ending only with the millennium. The time is not far distant when sickness will be considered as much a mark of ignorance as sin now is. Put your shoulder to the wheel, and never look back.

Counsel was next sought of a distinguished clergyman, who said he had in his younger days, for entertainment's sake, exercised mesmeric power over a young lady, who suffered so greatly therefrom that he had never again dared exert this influence. Though unconvinced that mesmerism could control unwilling subjects, he regarded Christian Science as but a new form

thereof, and consequently declined further inquiry into its merits.

My next call was upon a prominent minister, greatly interested in psychical research; but he did not care to give special attention to the matter, though afterward, through the press, he argued against the possibility of mental death-dealing, even while he did not deride mental healing or mental influence in general.

ESTRANGEMENT.

A WALL now seemed to frame itself between Mrs. Eddy and myself; for not yet was learned by heart that Scripture prophecy, "The serpent shall sting the bruising heel!" and various misunderstandings kept me from her till the early fall of 1884. Though feeling that she now preferred my absence, her previous lessons held my thought, and guided me anew into a sense of Almighty power.

DROWNING OVERCOME.

WE were passing the summer at Hull, on the Nantasket seacoast. One day I was quietly sewing in the parlor of the Oregon House, when in rushed the landlady, exclaiming: "Your children are drowned!" With an

unwonted sense of power I went downstairs, forced open the outer door against the wind's fury, and confronted a drenched and almost exhausted man, bearing in his seaweed-covered arms my apparently lifeless children, Gwendoline, aged seven, and Curtis, a year younger. Their saver was a guest at the hotel, — the father of a twelve-year-old lad who had led the smaller children too far out on the unsafe pier, but had saved himself as he saw them swept away.

Receiving them in my arms I carried them upstairs, and some ninety feet along the corridor, laid them (dripping, limp, and purple) on the bed, and locked the door. By the moment I returned to the bedside, Gwendoline opened her eyes. Taking Curtis in my arms I waited, with no sense of death, but clinging with spiritual tenacity to what rudiments of Christian Science had taken possession of me.

In twenty minutes my boy's rosy lips and cheeks were smiling into my face; and in an hour I walked into the parlor, with a dry-clad child grasping either hand, as if nothing had happened. No disagreeable symptoms followed the accident, though I was thereafter told that Curtis sank thrice beneath the waves, before his rescuer could reach him.

This sign of the healing power of mind brought me about forty people in Hull for treatment, though some declared the whole affair an outcome either of diabolism or delusion.

SYMPATHY AND PROGRESS.

AN appeal Heavenward had been answered with a healing demonstration; and as soon as bewildering doubts were banished as to Mrs. Eddy's mission, the way was open for seeking her. It was plain that any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of Truth's ambassador would obscure Deity as a present help; while appreciation of her motives, even while her methods seemed obscure, would afford sure access to the blessing of her impartations.

She received me with exquisite tenderness, listening sympathetically to the tale of the children's rescue, and a description of her student's strait and thorny road. Her great heart ached over each conflict, and rejoiced over each triumph. She bade me not dwell upon the past, except as it might redound to future profit, and invited me into her new primary class, to be held in November of that year, 1884.

Already I had been really among her disciples five years, and can name no other student, still

in the ranks, who was there when I entered them, in 1879; but not till my second term in her class-room did I join the Christian Scientist Association, made up of the graduates of her Metaphysical College.

TEMPTATION.

TO abide by the Teacher's supreme lessons was no easy task, since it involved dividing "the waters from the waters;" that is, an analysis of multitudinously surging thoughts, and a conclusion as to their true source and drift. Impulsions from Christian Science would lead me to subjugate every human doubt, dread, appetite, and passion; for Truth guarantees to the faithful a realization of the Bible promise, "Thou shalt have dominion over all things!" whereas antagonistic promptings, stealing into the fold of thought, like "wolves in sheep's clothing," would be misleading as to Mrs. Eddy's words and motives, and entice from stern duty as by her inculcated.

In March, 1885, Mr. Woodbury went through Mrs. Eddy's primary class, joined the Association, and thenceforward became my warm supporter and coworker, our Teacher declaring him one of the best men she had ever taught, and a natural Christian Scientist.

NEW EFFORTS.

FROM this period also dates a connection with the newly established Christian Science Journal, — a connection involving purse and pen, and continuing until the magazine's control passed into other hands.

After taking Mrs. Eddy's normal course, in November, 1885, there opened profounder knowledge of the possibilities of good, with a corresponding appreciation of the maelstrom of error. If the latent capabilities of righteousness were awakened in the mind of students, there was an equal liberation of mischievous proclivities, demanding restraint; a youthful pupil being a tender fledgling, needing the protecting strength of motherly pinions. The developing mind is like a field, new plowed and planted, whose teeming fertility attracts birds of prey, not from any wish for the good seed, but from such antipathy as engenders destructive aptitude.

It was a strange lesson, that the more good a human life reflects, the more sin it encounters.

Specious falsehoods came uppermost, not only by assertion, but by suggestion. If the Serpent's sinuous wiles were not always noted, this was no fault of my Teacher; but it was difficult

to remember there was flowing out from corrupted human nature a steady stream of evil, threatening to drown Truth's harbinger, as foretold in the Revelation of St. John.

If Christian Science was so real, and sin so unreal, why need so much time be required for watching the python instead of the angel?

WARNINGS.

THE pitfalls besetting unwariness were not always shunned, and the Teacher's skillful strength was oft needed for salvation. She faithfully explained the machinations of sin; but what student ever accepted her teaching, without mental reservation on this special point? Who has ever understood her thought, without subsequent corroboration in the fiery furnace or the claws of the dragon?

In the sacred hours of the class-room, illumined with the supernal light of revelation, did we not bare our feet, like Moses before the bush burning with holy fire? When selfhood was hushed, we saw the temple-veil rent asunder; neither was Gehenna hidden from our astonished gaze. Our Leader opened the door, that we might, like the Revelator, have glimpses of the awfulness latent in mortal mind. Upon our

hearts rested a sacrament of extreme unction, impelling us forth to fight the senses; counting not the cost of crucifixion, looking not backward upon Gomorrah, pressing anew the bleeding footprints of our past Master and our present Mother. As to how we have kept "the faith once delivered to the saints," each must answer at Heaven's tribunal.

CLERGY.

ABOUT this time some of my benefited patients urged my presentation of the subject to their revered pastor, an acknowledged spiritual leader in Boston, who was a distant relative of my husband, through intermarriage some two generations ago. This clergyman refused even to hear Mrs. Eddy speak in a friendly house; and a similar refusal came from an Orthodox preacher, whose wife and daughter had been somewhat under the care of Christian Scientists. Nevertheless there were present at this gathering at least a hundred people, whose questions Mrs. Eddy cordially answered, after her formal lecture.

Perchance one of these ministers intended the *amende honorable*, by later arranging for me a private interview, at his house, with a very

celebrated English divine, to whom it was a privilege to present the subject.

SCHOOL-CHARTERS.

IN July, 1886, at the suggestion of Mrs. Eddy, my charter for a Christian Science school was obtained from the State of Massachusetts; and by her further advice, initiatory measures were taken for establishing this school at Lynn, in the very room where she had begun her own work; but this counsel was speedily recalled because of opposition in that city. Lawrence was then proposed as eligible ground, but there the objectors were Christian Scientists. "Evidently Boston is your proper field," said the Teacher; and finally my school was located in the newly erected Hotel Berkshire, 192 Dartmouth Street, where during the next three years were graduated about one hundred and fifty students.

Teaching was trying work, but complaints to the Mother were silenced by her suggestion that it was no more difficult for others than for herself. There was the joy of converting friends by Truth; but this was counterbalanced by the responsibility felt for one's graduates, who not only found themselves struggling in a

gulf stream of good and evil influence, but also plunged their instructor into contrary psychic currents.

GENERAL CONVENTION.

BOTH my husband and myself were selected by Mrs. Eddy as delegates to the General Christian Science Convention, held in New York City in the February of 1886, and she did Mr. Woodbury the further honor of suggesting him as executive chairman; a position he declined in her favor, though remaining a member of the committee.

As the National Association was now properly organized, I applied to the officers for a charter under its rules, and forthwith formed Students' Christian Scientist Association Number Three, the preceding numbers, one and two, being assigned to associations instituted by two members of the Charter Committee, though our applications were simultaneous.

TRICKS AND TRAITS.

A SINGLE motive actuated my writings for the Christian Science Journal, — a disposition to testify to the sublimity of my Teacher's impartments, — and this motive rose

supreme over all obstacles. When tergiversations were attempted and ignorance led astray, — when mistakes found their way into the Journal itself, — I fought "as one who beateth the air," trying to fan away the virus of an invisible vampire, though the favoring wind was often defeated by misrepresentation.

There were times when our depleted regiment seemed a forlorn hope; nevertheless, the recruiting-station was never closed, and our Teacher valiantly grasped the dust-stained banner, and bore it heroically aloft, till there were enlisted fresh Aarons and Hurs to uphold her hands.

EDITORSHIP.

WHEN the acting editor of the Christian Science Journal vacated her office, in the closing weeks of 1885, the mantle fell on my shoulders, though only for a brief season.

The management of the Journal professed partiality for my contributions, and they were generally wrung from heart's blood, shed in passing through the Red Sea, from which I emerged wounded, but thankful for the insight as well as the deliverance, and yearning to save others from similar misfortunes, by frank explications, which might touch their sensibilities

and "renew their strength as eagles;" though this intent was often frustrated by suppression and alteration, or by change of signature.

A BRIGHT BOOK.

IN 1886 there appeared in a San Francisco paper, indorsed by the Association of Evangelical clergy of that city, a severe onslaught upon Christian Science, based on Bible grounds. Under Mrs. Eddy's approval this diatribe was taken to an old acquaintance of my father, the Rev. J. Henry Wiggin, a Unitarian clergyman, no longer in harness.

Though not a convert to Christian Science, he had done some literary work for us, and was a firm believer in fair play; so he wrote a terse, apt, and logical reply, entitled Christian Science and the Bible, by Phare Pleigh, a brochure which attracted much attention and is still sought by inquirers, its tenor being expressed in this postulate: "If Bible doctrines and wonders be true, why not Christian Science, which carries out those ideas, and aims to reproduce those marvels?" On the titlepage in the proof-sheets appeared my name as publisher, yet when the book was issued, the name of Woodbury had given place to another.

SUNDAY WORK.

THOUGH always an attendant on public worship, never did I become a church-member till 1886, when I united with the Church of Christ (Scientist) in Boston. With this connection came another set of untoward experiences; but there was no discord in the home, for the same step was taken in December, 1888, not only by my husband, but also by my daughter Gwendoline, only a dozen years old, who was invited to membership by our pastor, Mrs. Eddy, and had already received some instruction in the college class.

From childhood a Sunday-school teacher, I at one time aided Rev. Rush R. Shippen, in Worcester; and by him was recommended to the South Congregational Church, Rev. Edward Everett Hale's, when I removed to Boston; whence another warm letter sent me to Rev. Edward A. Horton's Sunday-school, in the Second Church, situated in Copley Square. This last place I resigned, after fully imbibing Christian Science, though the pastor and the superintendent heartily urged my continuance.

It was therefore but natural that Mrs. Eddy should ask me to continue in the same line,

especially as it was partly to supply my own needs that our Sunday-school in Chickering Hall was begun. Having already perceived the inconsistency of any other parochial connection for a Christian Science family, my children had been withdrawn from Mr. Horton's society; though we missed the wonted and delightful associations at such a school, and were anxious to be in another.

My new Sunday class increased from four to seventy-four in eight months; but haunting opposition so interfered that thrice I gave up classes I had gathered; though each time, at Mrs. Eddy's kind urgency, renewing the undertaking.

TOWARD THE RISING SUN.

WEARY, worn, and well-nigh broken-hearted over the prospects of Christian Science in our city, I now decided upon heeding the advice of the Teacher, and going away from home for a season; though during thirteen years of wedlock my husband and myself had never been twenty-four hours apart. Accordingly, in the May of 1887, I went to Augusta, Maine. In November I again went thither, and while there was requested, by Mrs.

Eddy, to write a history of sundry infelicitous experiences.

The following letter speaks for itself, and has an important bearing on points to be hereafter raised in connection with church organizations.

385 COMMONWEATH AVENUE, December 25, 1888.
TO THE CHURCH AND ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN SCIENTISTS IN AUGUSTA, MAINE.

My dear brethren: On this Christmas morn let me thank you for your labors in Christ's vineyard. Let me send you assurance of the faith that lays hold of all our hearts to-day, — that "unto us a Child is born, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful." Accept my Christmas greetings. Accept my prayers. Press on. The Way is Truth and Love. Walk in it. Affectionately yours,

M. B. G. EDDY.

Note this, that the Augusta church never had a charter, never had a pastor, never was organized; so this letter and these facts are alike symbolic.

CHURCH LOCATION.

A CHRISTIAN SCIENCE building was now greatly needed in Boston, where sectarianism shut us out from desirable halls. That of the Young Men's Christian Association was refused; and President Walker was equally

unwilling to admit us into the commodious auditorium of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

As a last resort was hired Chickering Hall, at 153 Tremont Street, facing the Common, an attractive hall, since transformed to other uses; though Mrs. Eddy steadfastly protested against its lack of daylight.

After several students had unsuccessfully tried to procure a suitable site for a new meeting-house, she requested Mr. Woodbury to take the matter in hand, which he did negotiating the purchase from the Nathan Matthews family, for about eleven thousand dollars, of the lot whereon now stands the edifice completed in 1895.

In order to gratify her further wish for a corner lot, Mr. Woodbury spent time and pains in replotting the tract of land bounded by Norway, Falmouth, and St. Paul Streets; and then, at considerable expense and her request, prepared plans for the proposed building. Though unpaid for his work, it was gratifying to receive the following appreciative message from the Teacher: "I invite you, my dear student, into my class, without charge!" and Mr. Woodbury accepted this offer, though finally paying the price in full, with accruing interest.

WESTWARD.

IN November, 1887, I was asked by Mrs. Eddy to visit Colorado, especially the city of Denver, where Christian Science had fallen into some disrepute. Inexpressibly disheartened by the presence of Achans in our camp, pained by the obloquy besetting measures in behalf of fellow-workers, having no caretaker to leave with my children, and lacking both courage and means, the mission was then declined.

Two months later, however, the outlook brightened, making me willing to leave Boston; so away I sped, towards the prairies. The trip occupied a week, instead of the usual three days, but not even my boots were removed during that time. In Chicago the mercury marked sixteen degrees below zero; and the cold steadily increased, till, beyond Omaha, we plunged into a Dakota blizzard, since renowned as the worst on record. The transit privations need not be described, nor the opportunities for aiding other travelers.

Perhaps to that storm, bringing me face to face with death, is due a renewed awakening to the depth of Truth. In a clearer light could now be descried the cabals of the year preceding.

Solemnly was a vow registered, to encounter any amount of ignominy, if thereby our cause might shake off the wolf clutching its throat.

In Denver the time was filled, night and day, with healing and lecturing, besides teaching a large class, in which were five married couples, the husbands as anxious to learn as the wives, which had not aforetime been the case in that city; and one of the leading dailies called attention to the fact that the newly arrived Boston disciple had actually induced some of the men to study. Moreover, I was courteously offered the press columns, through which to propagate my religious views.

Alas! on my return to Boston hope and cheer were again lost, through most trying misapprehensions concerning my recent journey.

A CELEBRATED CASE.

OF the Association's Publication Committee I was in 1887 made chairman by Mrs. Eddy. Ours was the unpleasant duty of keeping track of press-attacks anywhere made upon Christian Science, and meeting them, so far as we were able, — a task requiring the utmost vigilance.

Evil designs were plainly discernible, and

what was known as the West Medford case, of Mrs. Corner, led to the withdrawal from our ranks of some forty or fifty active members.

In May, 1888, by our Teacher's desire, I became a member of the Christian Scientist Publication Committee, under whose direction our Journal was then issued ; but finding myself never summoned to business meetings, and demurring thereat, I was dropped from the committee.

At this time Mrs. Eddy recommended Mr. Woodbury as her best successor in the presidency of the National Association ; but he was not elected to the position.

THE GRANITE HILLS.

IN July I visited New Hampshire, and while there was invited by the pastor to occupy the Lisbon Orthodox Congregational pulpit on a Sunday morning, he listening, in his family pew, to my exposition of Christian Science, — an occurrence considered unique in the history of our movement.

Thence I went to Mt. Washington, spoke a word for Christian Science in the Tip-Top House, and was glad to donate to that famous hostelry some of the writings of our Leader.

BAPTISMAL SCENE.

ON the last Sunday in February, 1888, was held the only service of this sort ever celebrated among us, — the baptism of twenty-nine children, including a few babes. No water was used, but over each little one Mrs. Eddy lifted her hands, pronouncing its name, and these words: "May the baptism of Christ, with the Holy Spirit, cleanse you from sin, sickness, and death!" Among these receiving the rite were the two older Woodbury children.

A GOOD FIGHT.

IN June, 1888, at the meeting of the National Association, at Chicago, there dawned upon me revelations of a New Heaven and New Earth. Boston students were waking to the issues of the hour, though divided in opinion as to whether they ought not to follow some self-appointed Joshua; but most students from other sections were determined to abide by our great Teacher, and it was my bounden and joyful duty to side with this latter contingent. Silence would have been my choice at this gathering, but for our Teacher's request that I speak for Boston.

At this convention Mrs. Eddy desired my

membership of the Executive Committee, but my husband was elected instead.

PROSPERITY.

ENRAPTURED by our Teacher's glorious words and conquest in Chicago, the next week found me in Montreal, for pioneer work across the border, where I gained some forty students, besides four others, who later were persuaded to come to our primal inspirer.

Prosperity attended my Boston academy, though watch and ward were needed over the interests of the association growing out of it. Spiritual sustenance was also indispensable for my other adherents. Then there were occasional trips to Augusta, where Christian Science labor was necessary.

To these duties must be added the almost daily demand for a public word, the support of our periodical, church, and parental association, all making increased drafts on wallet and faith, while domestic cares could be neither lightened nor evaded; but as every right-born child brings love with it, so with each burden came divine grace for its bearing, the laborer being calmed by turmoil, uplifted by trials, sweetened by the jewel of adversity; such friction unwittingly

elevating discipleship higher and higher, from Gethsemane up the Mount of Olives, and even towards the summit of Transfiguration.

While engaged with a Montreal class, in 1888, came a summons to attend the only obstetric class ever held by Mrs. Eddy, conjointly with her adopted son, Dr. Foster-Eddy, his first effort in this direction, and her second experience with a helper in the class-room, — changes which marked a Christian Science epoch, and which to me were the more gratefully helpful, because the instructions were shared with my husband.

Cheered by the new inspiration I called my own students together for a fresh course of six lessons, and widened my extemporaneous public efforts.

In March, 1889, my Teacher summoned me to the last session of a primary class, in which were six of my own students, who had, by my advice, betaken themselves to the higher guide. To the class also was invited my daughter, though she was dismissed after the first lesson ; Mrs. Eddy declaring this not a fit class for a girl so young, though later telling Gwendoline's mother that this one forenoon was all the child then needed. Nevertheless, her quaffing this solitary draft, direct from the fountain-head, has been a great gratification to our household.

ORGANIZATION.

AT this period the various normal students were largely engaged in chartering and founding branch churches in the order of Christian Science.

I followed suit, though against my own instincts, procuring a charter and organizing a church in Montreal, Canada, the pastor whereof was a student of Mrs. Eddy's; but he preached only a few weeks before a contrary breeze set flying the danger-signals. Our Teacher thereupon explained to me that material churches were among what the Book of Common Prayer calls "works of supererogation." Here was a warning not to sink the vital fact in the symbol.

PERNICIOUS BUBBLES.

THE National Association of 1889 was held on June 11, in Cleveland, Ohio.

A bulwark was needed to stem the erotic tide, favored in some quarters; and moral stamina was the more essential, because the odium of increasing divorce and domestic alienation, the land over, was often attributed to Christian Science.

Certain patent domestic misfortunes among mental workers naturally brought discredit

upon Christian Science, and increased my strenuous advocacy of the imperative integrity of the home.

Some essays of mine, on this very subject, were later rejected by the Christian Science Journal, as not coming within its scope; though it ought here to be said that the manager of this magazine at the time was a gentleman possibly better equipped for his post than any one previously in charge, if we perhaps except the Rev. J. Henry Wiggin, who never pretended to imbibe the doctrines of Christian Science but is always the friend of justice, and ever willing to help earnest truth-seekers to express their ideas clearly and effectively.

PULPIT SHADOWS.

ON July 15, 1889, came a notification, from the church-clerk, that, at a special meeting, when not present, I had been unanimously requested to fill the Chickering Hall pulpit the following Sunday, a proposition accepted, — after much protest on the part of Mr. Woodbury, — on condition that the day's expenses should solely devolve upon me, and not upon a depleted treasury; but this plan was overturned by a series of events hardly worth present men-

tion. As one result, however, Mrs. Eddy wrote me that so old a student in Christian Science should no longer rely upon her personal advice, but accept Infinite guidance.

In this dilemma, comfort came in the husband's tonic words: "If your Teacher did not know you could sustain the load, she would not bind it on your conscience."

ACCIDENT AND DEMONSTRATION.

IN the midsummer of 1889 there were healing and preaching to be done in Bangor. Thence another visit was paid the Maine capital, where a class was interrupted by the news that my husband, visiting with our boy in Manchester-by-the-Sea, on Cape Ann, had severely injured his back by an outdoor fall. Unwilling abruptly to forsake the higher duty of teaching, class-lessons and public lectures were continued a week later, when I rejoined Mr. Woodbury, who meanwhile had returned to Boston, with no unusual help beyond a friendly arm, and resumed his office work, the ribs — which had been broken off near the spine, besides being otherwise fractured — having reset themselves, without pain or surgery.

CHANGE OF BASE.

IT was generally understood among Mrs. Eddy's normal students, that they should not themselves teach affluent or prominent applicants, however worthy, but send them to her college to quench their thirst; and this we gladly did.

While teaching in Bath, Maine, in August of this same year, Mrs. Eddy published a notice in the newspapers, stating that she had closed her college. This notice was as follows, and can be found in the September, 1889, issue of the Christian Science Journal:

MASSACHUSETTS METAPHYSICAL COLLEGE:

NOTICE.

There are one hundred and sixty applications lying on the desk before me for the primary class in the Massachusetts Metaphysical College, and I cannot do my best work for a class that contains over one quarter of that number. If all these should be taught, another large number would be waiting for the same class, and the other three courses delayed.

The work is more than one person can accomplish; but the demand is for my exclusive teaching, and dissatisfaction with any other, which leaves me no other alternative but to give up the whole thing.

Deeply regretting the disappointment this must occasion, and with grateful acknowledgments to the public, I now close my college.

(Signed) MARY BAKER G. EDDY.

Of course this implied a complete change in coöperative methods. Therefore, on the completion of my Bath lessons, September found me at home, seeking no human counsel, but assiduously praying for God's leadership in this deviating highway.

The cross was indeed changed, but not lightened, nor set abloom with roses. Appeals for instruction were coming from far and near, — my academy being the outcome, not only of familiarity with Christian Science, but of an entire life-work.

Much had been endured, both in my school's incipiency, and in keeping it, through nearly three years, in such pure accord with Divine Science as brought it to a point beyond our most sanguine expectations; for prosperity had been within a hand-grasp. The irksome task of blazing the trees had been accomplished, leaving a well-defined lane through the forest, with the surety of a cordial welcome at the end. Now this hope was ruthlessly shattered.

These worldly considerations, however, were not the chief ingredients of my thought; but the anxiety to discern present duty, so that my action should properly supplement my Teacher's. Not without fear and trembling was the decision reached to withdraw from remunerative work,

retire personally into the background, and put the Book (Science and Health) foremost; but this determination was at last made, and promptly communicated to her, and to all others whom it concerned.

From Mrs. Eddy no reply was at once received; but the next month she dissolved the Christian Scientist Association. In October she dissolved her college; and in the November following sent me an earnest letter, with a copy of the resolutions by which this result was achieved, and a request that I insert them in the Boston dailies, — a duty gladly performed.

ADRIFT FROM THE CHURCH.

THE next half-year was replete with hardships. Consistently with the departure from medicine, when we embraced the healing doctrines of Science and Health, we now felt that disconnection with every visible church should be the outcome of disbelief in such organizations; and this step was accordingly taken, Mrs. Eddy being duly forewarned of our intention; nor did many weeks elapse before she disbanded the Boston Church altogether, for reasons stated in her previous withdrawal from its pastorate.

From the National Association we also withdrew, Mrs. Eddy and the officers being properly notified of our action. Whether these acts were the outcome of untempered zeal on our part, or were the response to a divine call, the future history of the cause must disclose.

DISSOLUTION AND DISCIPLINE.

THE next step was the termination of my academy, when its directors heard a statement of the new condition and convictions. Then the Woodbury academic association held a meeting, and listened to an explanation as to the extinction. Though with a few exceptions faithful to my leadership, they voted to discontinue their beloved society, and notify the National Association of our charter's surrender; albeit the fact that no other schools or associations were given up seemed peculiar, as we had never even dreamed of being the Teacher's sole imitators.

Though often importuned to do so, never was I presumptuous enough to teach any of Mrs. Eddy's direct pupils, or in anywise interfere with the rights of her other authorized graduates.

Practice and patience developed power in silencing the jarring testimony of the physical

senses, and apprehending ("laying hold upon") that by which, as Paul phrases it, "I am apprehended" (or "laid hold upon"), the cross of Christ. This was evinced by my little flock, who decided to have no more Sunday preaching, or even weekly meetings for religious discussions, but to spend their sacred hours alone, in communication with the Book and the Bible.

WITH THE LEADER.

IN January of the new year I enjoyed a visit with my ever-beloved Teacher, who gave comfort in these words, though they were not at the moment received in their deeper import: "Go home and be happy. Commit thy ways unto the Lord. Trust Him, and He will bring it to pass."

RENEWED MOTHERHOOD.

HERE this narrative approaches a crucial point. On the morning of June 11, 1890, there was born to me a baby boy; though, till his sharp birth-cry saluted my ears, I had not realized that prospective maternity was the interpretation of preceding months of poignant physical discomfort, not unreasonably attributed

to other physiological causes and changes, — growing out of my age, and former reliance upon medical opinion, — pointing in the direction of some fungoid formation.

Even the doctor, contemplating our unpreparedness, could not help an exclamation of surprise; though not the mother absorbed his attention, but the child, with its wholesome beauty and serene atmosphere.

An hour after the birth I rose and bathed. In the afternoon I was up and dressed, and at night dined with my family. The next day I went out of doors, and every day thereafter, the resumption of customary good health leading me into the open air. We named our boy Prince Woodbury, partly because he came into our family as a veritable harbinger of peace.

BETHESDA.

AVOIDING the barbaric outburst of the Fourth of July, we went, the day before, to Ocean Point, for a Maine summering.

While there occurred the thought of baptizing little Prince, in a singularly beautiful salt pool, whose rocky bottom was dry at low tide and overflowing at high tide, but specially attractive at mid tide, with its two feet of crystal

water. A crowd of people had assembled on the neighboring bluffs, when I brought him from our cottage not far away, and laid him three times prayerfully in the pool; and when he was lifted therefrom, they joined in a spontaneously appropriate hymn. While lying beneath the surface his baby eyes were open, and smiling upward; and this composure under water continues unto this day, for he loves it as his native element.

GROWTH IN GRACE.

THE isolation of our lonely retreat brought leisure for contemplation; and motherly feelings became potentially uplifting, my babe's existence deepening my gaze into a world hitherto unknown. His loving outcry banished pain; and his tiny hand waved a sea of turbulent thought-billows into a humbling sense of peace. In solitary vigils, not so much the Teacher, or messenger, as the teaching, or divine message, absorbed my thought.

A new sense transfigured earth and sky. Fearsome spectres faded in the light of celestial dawn. Materiality resolved itself more absolutely into subjectivity; and mortal beliefs, formerly distinct as forms of ill-health, seemed

fast melting into their native mist of nothingness, described in the Genesis narrative.

STRAITS AND STRESS.

CHRISTIAN Science work had sometimes won me an income of several thousand dollars a year; but this revenue now ceased. In giving up both teaching and healing, the cost was not uncounted; though, just before the change, debts had been incurred with reference to future classes. Large sums, due for services rendered, remain unpaid unto this day; but, after a brief season, worriment was overcome by the consciousness of right motives, and willingness to abide the divine pleasure.

A strange posture of affairs! None approved my course, while many doubted my sanity, if not my integrity. Was there no balm in Gilead, to help a disciple whose future had but recently been so brilliant? Must her supplications be vain in her extremity? Oh God of the lonely, come to others with comforting guidance, as to one heart then Thou camest. Feed them with the manna of Principle! Quench their thirst at the wellspring of Love!

Applicants for aid and instruction had to

be turned away, money in hand. Though some patient would indignantly exclaim, "She can heal me in an hour, if she will let me see her!" yet, for nearly two years, every such dollar was refused, while the constant exertion was to conform my life to our Leader's last message.

During this interval, came occasional letters from my Teacher, filled, as aforetime, with affectionate counsel. In some way relief must come, and so it did; for, through unexpected channels, fortune flowed into the family coffers.

HOUSEHOLD JOYS.

IN September, 1890, our return to Boston found us in great need of a more commodious home, and, at my earnest solicitation, Mr. Woodbury bought the house we subsequently occupied, No. 412 Newbury Street, in range with the one formerly occupied by our Teacher, on Commonwealth Avenue.

With the New Year of 1891 came the conviction that healing and teaching were again in order, though by no means under the old *régime*.

One by one fresh students appeared, till, in the next five years, they outnumbered those of my former academy. Usually my teaching-price has been a hundred dollars for twelve

lessons ; but for a year or two, at that period, it was two hundred, — twice the amount charged by Mrs. Eddy's other students, save in a few exceptional cases.

A NEW CHURCH.

ON September 23, 1893, Mrs. Eddy reorganized her church. Not for another twelvemonth, however, did I try to mingle with her students, but maintained the practice, acquired during the few preceding years, of spending worship-time with the Book, the Bible, and my family. Though non-attendants at the Christian Science meetings, we espoused no other doctrine, and convened no public meetings of any sort ; nor did I meet my students socially more than three times in five years ; inasmuch as all their instructor possessed, her students likewise possessed, — God and the Word.

Meanwhile Mrs. Eddy had removed her home to Concord, N. H. There, in May, 1894, I was told by her that she had felt the great need of a church for the good of humanity. Under these circumstances I naturally wished to help her new organization ; but she said, in response to several proposed plans, " Wait, and Love will open the way."

Early in 1895, in accordance with her desire,

expressed through the Christian Science Journal and otherwise, I asked admission to the Mother Church ; and the request was partially granted in April, the petitioner being admitted on a probation of two years. Though hiring and occupying a seat in the new meeting-house, dedicated that winter, no cordial welcome or fellowship greeted me ; and my uplifted voice met with scant approval in the Friday evening conference.

SACRIFICE.

MY income from Christian Science in the year 1894 had amounted to several thousand dollars ; but now, as five years before, monetary considerations were sacrificed upon the shrine of Love. During 1895, and part of 1896, all applications for instruction, and most of those for treatment, were turned aside, the applicants being sent to 95 Falmouth Street, Boston, the church-headquarters for Christian Science healers and teachers. Moreover, I advised my students to seek union with the Mother Church, and attend regularly its meetings, when locality rendered this feasible, — advice heartily accepted ; but, so far as I am informed, no reply whatever was vouchsafed the requests of my students or my daughter. On

the contrary, all my recognized friends were cold-shouldered, like their teacher.

At the Friday evening meeting, the last week in October, 1895, I spoke virtually as follows:

Were I able to remember all the experiences given here by honest hearts, I should have a treasure of pearls indeed; but, though my memory may not wholly retain them, they will exist in mind, and continue to do good.

We know how tenderly the Master took note of little things, — the widow's mite, the sparrow's fall, the very hairs of our heads; but that did not cause him to lose sight of the greater demonstrations crowding his career. It is well to offer our little gifts; but surely, to this shrine, we should also bring our best. All these testimonies go to prove conclusively one point, — that the leaves of the Tree of Life are "for the healing of the nations." We, who believe that this tree typifies Divine Science, — and that its leaves are the component thoughts of the One Mind which is God, — believe also that these leaves come reflected as food for human thought in two ways: abstractly and technically, through Science and Health; but, vitally and immanently, through the earth-life of one whom we love to name the "Word made flesh," and dwelling among us.

If the vignette of this woman, which has appeared on the pages of history, does not glow as yet in all the beauty of its spiritual outline, it may be on account of the many crude and mediocre attempts (my own possibly among the number) to reproduce it. The future will give its true perspective.

And what of the other tree, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil! May its leaves not represent the sum

total of the surging opinions, conceptions, delusions, laws, and prophecies of mankind, ever since human nature earned a history? and are not our mortal minds simply bundles of these beliefs, bound, by ancestral cords, into mental fagots, ready to be burned by the torch of Truth!

May we not feel that the healing is the action of the leaves of the true tree upon the leaves of the false tree, an influence which must go on till every error be destroyed?

This brings me to a question so often asked, Do Christian Scientists give or take medicine? I answer, Yes, — daily and hourly. What is the medicine? The leaves of the Tree of Life. It has been humorously said that Christian Scientists are the only class of physicians who dare take their own physic, or to prescribe for their own families; and I know of no other remedy of which it can be said, — the more one takes of it, the better he is.

On the following Monday my name was dropped from the membership roll, the official notification specifying no charge; nor was there any citation before the church or its officers. However, I was willing to be smitten on both cheeks, and, with my children and students, continued to attend every service, until, early in January, the money paid for pew-hire in the church was returned me by mail, with a notification that no longer could our family be allowed to occupy seats. But what of our previous monthly offerings? Were those former dollars less tainted with heresy?

In a letter from Mrs. Eddy to my husband

and myself, dated January 28, 1896, was this passage:

I did not know that a church-meeting was called, and a vote taken to prevent your leasing seats in our Church. Had I known such a movement was premeditated, I should have objected to it.

On April 4, 1896, I was formally notified, by letter, that I had been "excommunicated forever from the First Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, Mass."

This excommunication was published in the June, 1896, issue of the Christian Science Journal; and Mrs. Eddy, in a letter dated June 11, 1896, wrote me that she had not advised the excommunication, nor known of its publication until she read it in the Journal; and that she had that day sent to Mr. William B. Johnson, the clerk of the church, the following telegram:

I did not advise it, or know that you published Woodbury's excommunication, till reading it. Say and do nothing more about her.

It is interesting to note that at the date of this excommunication (April 4, 1896) I was neither a member of the church, nor an applicant for membership, had no seats in the edifice, and had not attended service there for about three months; yet no reasons were adduced to

justify the absurdity of excommunicating a person not identified with the church in any particular.

THE TRUE VINE.

SO profound has been my trust in God's healing method, as revealed through Christian Science, and so convincing the proofs vouchsafed me, that never since 1880, have I once turned for aid to material medicine, either for myself, or any other member of the family.

Illnesses have sometimes assumed severe forms; but, with patience, hope, and courage, I have clung to my mental system of therapeutics until health was restored.

The text-book, Science and Health, in all these past years has been my daily companion, adviser, friend, and inspirer. From its pages come strength to endure trials, resist temptations; while consolation and calm float ever in upon my sense, in such abundance that never do my feet long to stray into any other fold whatever, wherein sheep and shepherd attempt to thrive by methods not prescribed in its teachings.

GENEROSITY.

IN self-defence one thing should here be declared, even though modesty forbids.

During my years of effort in Christian Science, not one, among the thousands applying to me for aid, has been turned away because of poverty. The poor have been always with me. More has been given than received. In 1895 and 1896, through my husband's ready help, I paid out three times as much as I earned.

Partially, or wholly, he and I have clothed and supported entire households. Loans have remained unpaid; and large sums have been given to needy persons, sometimes exceeding a thousand dollars to a single household. My family has paid Mrs. Eddy the full amount required by her for our tuition; and I lavishly aided the Church Building Fund, to forward the purchase of the land upon which the Boston edifice was afterwards erected.

Prior to the dissolution of the church, in 1889, I was one of the largest contributors towards its running expenses.

I have been a liberal purchaser of Mrs. Eddy's works, buying hundreds of copies of Science and Health, which I began, years ago, to supply gratis, not only to persons of limited means, but to physicians, professors, clergymen, schools, and public libraries. I published, through the firm of Oliver Ditson & Co.,

and also sold, fifteen hundred copies of Mrs. Eddy's hymn, Christ My Refuge, the net proceeds swelling the Church Building Fund.

From its outset I adopted the Christian Science Journal into my heart, and labored for it assiduously, increasing its list of readers by hundreds, though this involved the payment, by myself, of many a subscription.

I obtained for its columns the advertisements of leading business firms, — and this at a time when funds were much needed. By my unaided efforts, copies of the magazine were each month placed on sale at every railroad station and leading bookstore in Boston; and my notice of the contents of each issue was published in several leading Boston papers. I bought and circulated a hundred or two copies of each Journal; and once, when there was a special need, I purchased five hundred copies, for distribution broadcast over the country.

During the years in which I thus held a laboring oar, I was happy in the work, for the waif was well-nigh friendless; and even though I knew such arduous duties might not always be needed, there was joy in working, as one should pray, in the closet.

Many persons applying for instructions I have advised to study with another Christian

Science instructor, a course involving the loss of dollars by the hundreds.

Lessons and treatment have been offered and bestowed without charge. Families of several members have been taught for a single fee; and whole classes have been instructed without a penny's return, — an example not, to my knowledge, repeated by any other Christian Scientist. In February, 1896, thirty-three pupils were thus taught, the course requiring a fortnight.

Furniture and house-rent have been contributed freely to kinsfolk and students stranded by misfortune.

In fact, so far from being mercenary, my almsgiving has often been beyond my means; though in many instances the charity has apparently been wasted; for I have learned to know, with an old writer, that "there are some who bear a grudge, even to those who do them good."

"Let not your left hand know what the right hand doeth" is the Lord's command and Christian reluctance has heretofore precluded the avowal of facts, now referred to, only because circumstances so demand; and it is hoped these statements will not be misunderstood by those whose opinion I value, especially students who have so abundantly assisted me with their own benefactions to those in want.

Moreover, my delight in spreading what to me was the Gospel, has been an incentive to my husband's steady aid in this direction, when my own receipts were too meagre.

ERRANT MISSIVES.

GREAT errors oft from little causes spring. Gail Hamilton once wrote a pungent essay on the Total Depravity of Inanimate Things.

To such depravity may perchance be laid the miscarriage of important letters to Mrs. Eddy, and from her to me, some of which are referred to in this narrative, which have not been returned from the dead-letter office, yet are reported as never reaching their proper destination.

STRAIGHTFORWARDNESS.

IN my curative methods, no thought-influence has ever been brought to bear upon a patient or student, that might not be proclaimed to the four winds of the compass; and rarely do I use the silent argument in preference to the spoken or written word, because open treatment vastly lessens the possibility of misapprehension on the part of the recipient.

The Golden Rule is, and always has been, the keynote of genuine Christian Science.

POSTLUDE.

ANGEL of Mercy, besieging Heaven with the wail of breaking hearts, didst note the lonely night-vigils? Sawest thou the white impulses which burst from a bruised spirit, but were pressed back to the aching sense as seductively demoniacal, and labeled Anathema Maranatha, — cursed of God and man? Didst thou convert them into balm for every wound?

When before the all-seeing Eye each character page is revealed, —

> When the sun grows cold,
> And the stars are old,
> And the leaves of the judgment book unfold, —

then at least shall it appear what manner of woman this was, who loved unto the end.

First printed in The Outlook, New York, May 26, 1894.

A PLEA FOR CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.

THIRTY years ago, above the horizon loomed a new idea. In her text-book, Science and Health, the discoverer gives the date of this idea's advent into her consciousness as 1866; its publication being copyrighted later.

Subsequent to Apostolic days, I find no previous record of such a healing method. Instances abound of saintly exemption from untoward fleshly conditions; this immunity being attributable to stoical philosophy or exalted faith, operating by a process apparently incommunicable to others, and not analyzable in the crucible of cause and effect, but regarded as specially personal dispensations.

New Testament wonders are pronounced mere proofs of Messiahship; and to hope for their repetition, even on a smaller scale, is considered blasphemous. Christian Science asks if all the Saviour's manifestations may not have been rooted in his sense of infinite Love, whereby he strove to teach others his healing rules, which God would confirm by signs following. In his name should they drink poison unharmed, and heal the sick. The worst devils were wolves in sheep's clothing, wizards making merchandise

of Truth, false Messiahs prophesying lies; but these demons were expelled, and Jesus thereafter affirmed, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from Heaven." Christian Science shows how mortals, while still in the flesh, may abolish the claims and ills thereof. Obeying the ethical law, in thought as well as deed, believers understand that Christ's crown was won at the close of his earthly career; that, as Jesus left no corpse for worms, a similar triumph should grace perfect manhood. As, after Jesus' burial, he talked, ate, grieved, Christian Science declares this condition to be an important element in his God-sent demonstration. In our great exemplar we do not find death involving cessation from human emotions, nor can we infer that our common death-experience is like his.

None of us die and rise like Jesus, who did not regard Heaven as the outcome of death, but death as the last enemy to be overcome. According to Christian Science, the Master's miracles are as orderly and interdependent as mathematical axioms, — steps upward from fleshly control; but they are not vicariously profitable. We must tread the wine-press for ourselves, and every step must be taken in sequence. The first is honest thought; the second, moral courage; the third, unselfish pur-

pose. Then the way is open toward that elevation of sense arising from the contrite heart; but if we reject the Christly foundation-stone, we build on sand.

Like Peter, some Scientists may think they can now walk on the sea, because Jesus once did so; that, if he forsook the tomb, they need never enter it; but the thirty-third Masonic degree is not conferred before its thirty-two predecessors.

Our world sneers when practitioners fail; but ancient scoffers derided Christ's success. Popular religion inculcates a hope of immortality, but leaves man horribly uncertain about his body, dismayed by the yawning grave. How different Jesus' victory!

Christian Science says, "Be Christlike, and ye, too, may authoritatively rebuke disease!" assuring us that we may outgrow a legion of evils.

Could the Magdalen convey her salvation to other sufferers, or must each apply individually to Jesus? If the latter, small hope is there for such as never beheld him corporeally.

It seems reasonable that one immaculately born could heal others of sin and disease; but if Christian Science, discerned by one ordinarily begotten, can rise to equally saving heights, may not this suggest the greater works predicted by Jesus?

Understanding his own spiritual and physical freedom, the Christian Scientist can impart the knowledge to honest students. It is idle to declare the present achievements of this healing school too insignificant for respectful attention. Ignorant and unprincipled adherents may trail its standard in the dust, but wait! The ring of genuine coin will vibrate in the listening ear.

The relation of mind with mind involves the moral responsibility of each to all. That hackneyed phrase, "Mind over matter," implies Job's sublime statement: "Yet in my flesh shall I see God." Of another aphorism, "No sensation in matter," the real meaning is: There is no pleasure or success in wrong-doing, present results to the contrary notwithstanding.

There are noble physicians and clergymen, better fitted for royal healing-robes than many who parade Christian Science diplomas. When imminent death or sin quickens the sharp cry for aid, this may be the opening window for divine strength. If in any Christian Scientist there are increasingly regenerating signs, to that shrine will come the famished, because the wheat and oil are there. Beulah's richness once gained, from its plenitude the needy may be filled.

JOSEPHINE C. WOODBURY.

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